TL1711-17

Diet Members Forum on East Timor

Room No. 725, Members Building No. 2 House of Representatives, 1-2, Nagata-cho 2-chome, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100 JAPAN
Tel. 03-508-7475 Fax. 03-502-5954

Statement on East Timor
to the Special Committee on Decolonization
8 August 1991

Diet Members' Forum on East Timor, Japan

Secretary-General
Satsuki Eda, Member
House of Representatives
Japanese Diet

Honorable Chairman and distinguished Committee Members:

We were most pleased to learn that the Committee was holding this session on East Timor this year.

We, the Diet Members Forum on East Timor, are a supra-party parliamentary group organized in November 1986. Currently we have 92 members from both the House of Representatives and the House of Councillors. The Forum has been sending a representative to this Committee every year, but this year we are unable to do so, because this session coincides with the Extraordinary Session of Japan's Diet. We are sending a written statement to be read at your session, instead.

We wish to convey two points to your Committee.

The first is the position of the Japanese Government on the status of East Timor. We feel it necessary to clarify it here again, since we still keep on receiving inquiries on this point. The Japanese Government has never recognized the annexation of East Timor by Indonesia. Japan's official position has been the following: "Our basic position regarding the area of East Timor is that Japan continues to observe the negotiations between the parties concerned under the good offices of the United Nations Secretary-General" and that "We are not in a position to judge on the jurisdiction of the island." The Japanese Government has therefore instructed the publishers of school text-books to draw the same type of line between East and West Timor as the one drawn between Morocco and West Sahara. (Please refer to map) This line indicates that an international conflict exists concerning the status of the area where it is drawn and that the conflict is still pending a settlement. The Diet Members Forum has repeatedly confirmed this position through questions on the Diet floor and through written questions to the Government.

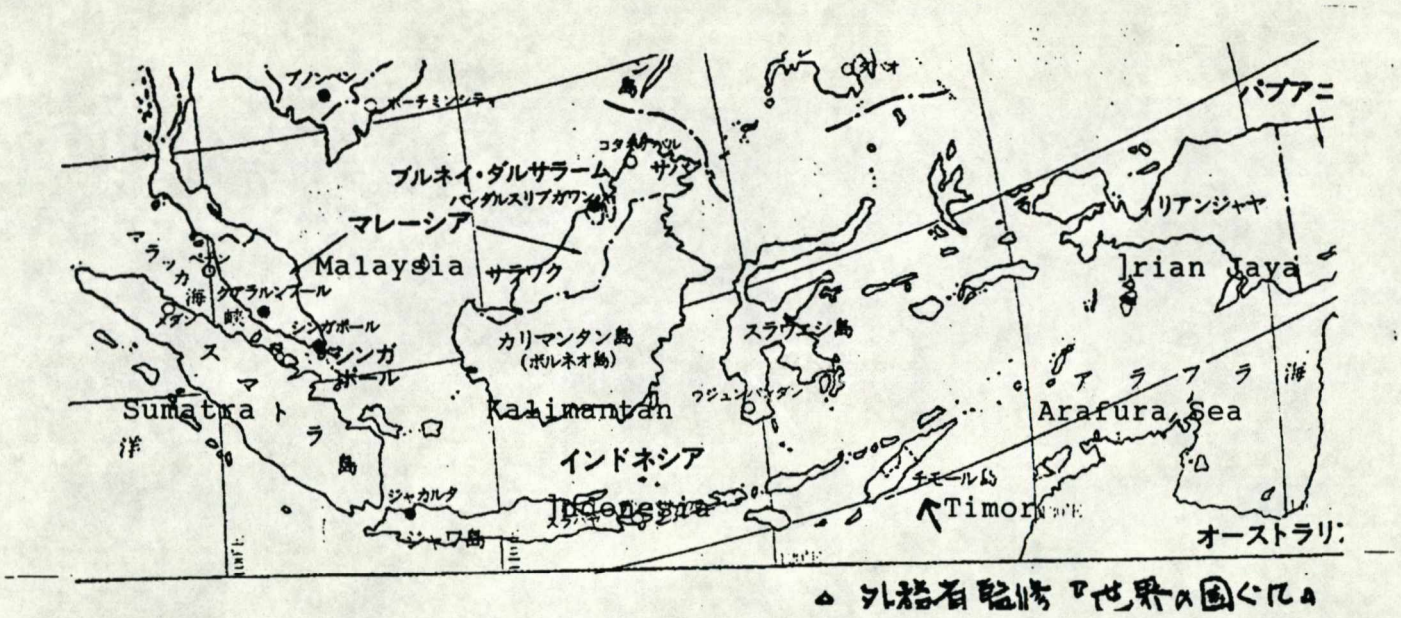
The point which we have been most seriously questioning is the non-participation of representatives of the East Timorese people, the most important party in the conflict, in the negotiations. We intend to keep on calling on the Government to continue working actively to have all parties concerned to participate at the conference as in the case of the

Cambodian peace deputy talks. The Japanese Government has expressed its concern to the Indonesian Government on human rights of the East Timorese people. At high-level consultations held between the two Governments on 11-12 March 1991, ~~Vice~~ Foreign Minister Hisashi Owada requested the Indonesian Government to pay due attention to human rights problems in East Timor. Moreover, Prime Minister Kaifu has announced four criteria regarding the implementation of Official Development Assistance (ODA). They are military spending, arms export and import, possession and/or development of nuclear and bio-chemical weapons and degree of democratization. The government intends to conduct more rigid evaluations of the recipient countries in respect to these criteria, and to reduce or even stop ODA to those countries whose military expenditure is outstanding or which are against democratization. The purpose of setting up these four criteria is to make some economic contribution to the world and to the peace after the Gulf War. We believe that if these criteria are honestly applied to Indonesia, the No. 1 recipient of Japan's ODA, discussion on the issue of East Timor will be inevitable. The Diet Members Forum will watch how this new policy is applied.

The other point is that the Diet Members Forum is planning to visit East Timor. This year it submitted a request to the Indonesian Embassy and the Japanese Foreign Ministry regarding its plan to visit East Timor between 19-21 July. The Mission was composed of four members (One Liberal Democrat, two Social-Democrats and one United Social-Democrat). It is a pity that the plan was not accepted by Indonesia, but adjustments are still being made through diplomatic channels of the two countries. If this mission should come about, it will be the first delegation from the Japanese Diet to visit East Timor. We hope we will be able to submit our report on our visit at this Committee next year.

We appreciate the efforts made by the Committee for the resolution of the East Timor problem and we feel honored at being given the opportunity to tackle this important issue together with you.

I thank you for your kind attention.



△ 外務省監修「世界の国々」△

Map from "Countries of the World" printed under the supervision of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japanese Government